

Theology vol. 8
REMARKS

ON

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES;

BY

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Search the Scriptures. *John, chap. v. ver. 39.*

Despise not prophecyings. *1 Thessalonians, chap. v. ver. 20.*

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REMARKS, &c.

HAVING for very many years, with the most awful apprehensions, made the Holy Scriptures my constant study; and being deeply impressed with a full conviction of the truth of Divine Prophecy (evidenced from age to age by the exact completion of so many tremendous events foretold; from the denunciation of the destruction of *Nineveh*, *Tyre*, and *Jerusalem*, down to the destruction of the Roman empire.)

And being fully persuaded that we were rapidly advancing to one of the most interesting periods of the world; I endeavoured, with sincere humility, but with earnest energy, to awaken the attention of mankind, to the approaching scene of things; in a work, printed in the very beginning of the year 1788, and entitled *Morsels of Criticism*.

In that work, I endeavoured to shew, that the Holy Words of Prophecy plainly contained an account, *in chronological order*, of the great over-ruling events designed, for the wisest purposes, by the Almighty Creator, to take place in succession; from the descending of our Lord, *The Blessed Messiah*, upon earth, in his state of humiliation, born as a man; to His second coming in Glory, in the Clouds of Heaven.

And I then endeavoured to point out *the very parts* of the Prophecies, which, by a fair deduction of facts, seemed expressly to relate to *the very times in which we lived*.

And I endeavoured also to shew, in very plain language, that the pouring out of *the Seventh Vial*, mentioned in the book of the Revelations, was just at hand. And that, as the *Two first Woes*; namely, that of *the Dreadful invasion of the Saracens*; and that of the no less *Dreadful invasion of the Turks*; (which were manifestly the scourge, and punishment, of the corrupted *Eastern Church*,) were past; * so *the Third and Last Woe*, which was to be the fearful scourge of the corrupted *Western Church*, was very near.

And I finished what I had to say, concerning the dreadful, then impending, scourge, in these words: †

“ It will be happy for those who shall live some years hence,
 “ if they can prove me guilty of mistake, in this point.—I speak
 “ and write with cautious reverence, and fear; acknowledging I
 “ am liable to error, and may be mistaken; and by no means
 “ pretending to prophecy; but still as apprehending myself bound
 “ not to conceal *the truth*, where any matter appears to be re-
 “ vealed in Holy Scripture: and especially, when the bringing an
 “ impending denunciation to light, (if it be a truth,) may be an
 “ useful warning, and caution, to many; and prevent their be-
 “ coming accessory to the evil.”

The *Woe* is now indeed come to pass; almost in its full pleni-

* See Revelations, chap. viii. ver. 13. chap. ix. ver. 12. chap. xi. ver. 14. And the whole concerning the two first woes, may be seen commented upon, in the *Morsels of Criticism*. From p. 403 to 430, in perfect consistency with the ideas of the ablest preceding Commentators.

† p. 461.

tude. But so many other corresponding events have also come to pass, elucidating those words of Divine Prophecy which immediately follow the words that were alluded to; that I cannot but *now* think it again a duty, to add somewhat further: to turn the attention of the serious, and contemplative, if possible more earnestly, to that Sacred Book of Prophecy; concerning which it is declared;

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.—As indeed it even then was.—Some of the first events beginning immediately to take place: and the completion of the rest, having continued to follow, in constant succession, ever since to this hour.*

And concerning which it is also said, even by an Holy Angel, speaking to the inspired writer,

I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the Prophets, and of them WHICH KEEP THE SAYINGS OF THIS BOOK.†

And concerning which it ought further to be remembered, that its holy words are so tremendously guarded, as to have it positively proclaimed aloud,

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life.‡

* Revelations, chap. i. ver. 3.

† Revelations, chap. xxii. ver. 9.

‡ Revelations, chap. xxii. ver. 18, 19.

The pouring out of the Seventh emblematical Vial, which it seems plain, was just to precede, and very nearly to be contemporary with, the sounding of the Seventh emblematical Trumpet, is in our translation described in these words :

Revelations, chap. xvi.

Ver. 17. *And the seventh Angel poured out his vial into the air ; and there came a great voice out of the Temple in Heaven, from the throne, saying, IT IS DONE.*

Ver. 18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings ; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*

Ver. 19. *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell : and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

Ver. 20. *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

Ver. 21. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of Heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent : and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail ; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.—*

But the original Greek stands thus :

Ver. 17. Καὶ ὁ ἑβδομος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς* τὸν ἀέρα· καὶ ἐξῆλθε φωνὴ μεγάλη ἀπὸ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ οὐρανῶ, ἀπὸ τοῦ θρόνου, λέγουσα· Γέγονε.

Ver. 18. Καὶ ἐγένοντο φωναὶ καὶ βρονταὶ καὶ ἀστραπαὶ· καὶ σεισμὸς ἐγένετο μέγας, οἷος οὐκ ἐγένετο ἀφ' οὗ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐγένοντο ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τηλικούτος σεισμὸς οὕτω μέγας.

Ver. 19. Καὶ ἐγένετο ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη· εἰς τρία μέρη, καὶ αἱ πόλεις τῶν ἐθνῶν ἔπεσον· καὶ Βαβυλῶν ἡ μεγάλη ἐμνήσθη ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, δοῦναι αὐτῇ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ.

Ver. 20. Καὶ πᾶσα νῆσος ἔφυγε, καὶ ὄρη οὐχ ἐνρέθησαν.

Ver. 21. Καὶ χάλαζα μεγάλη ὡς ταλαντιαία καταβαίνει ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανῶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄνθρωπους· καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν θεὸν ἐκ τῆς πληγῆς τῆς χαλάζης· ὅτι μεγάλη ἐστὶν ἡ πληγὴ αὐτῆς σφόδρα.

This vial therefore we find described, in the first place, *as poured out into THE AIR.*

And it is surely worthy of remark ; that in a similar manner, *the second vial* had been represented *as poured out upon THE SEA* ; † and *the fourth vial*, *as poured out upon THE SUN.* ‡

* The Alexandrian MSS. has it ἐπὶ ; *upon* : but that does no ways alter the meaning of the Emblem.

† Revelations, chap. xvi. ver. 3.

‡ Revelations, chap. xvi. ver. 8.

And if I was right, in my conclusion, that the effect of the pouring out of the second vial, described a chronological period from 1096 to 1273 : and that the effects of the fourth vial, denoted a period from 1519 to 1713 ; there are some few facts that have hitherto been unnoticed, that well deserve to be remarked.

For besides the attention due to the peculiar circumstances of history, which were connected with those periods ;* and did perfectly accord with the emblematical descriptions ; (whilst those descriptions could not accurately, and in all points, be by any means applied to any other periods in this world whatever) : besides, I say, the attention due to those peculiar circumstances of history, it still further deserves our notice ; that, about the first of those periods, when the vial was said to be poured out *upon the Sea* ; Navigation was actually, as it were, first introduced into the world, as to any skill beyond mere coasting ; by the discovery of the *Mariners Compass* : which, let the disputes concerning its first invention be settled how they will ; and whether *Flavio de Melfi, the Neapolitan* ; or, *Marcus Paulus, the Venetian* ; or, according to *Guyot, of Provence*, some Frenchman, about A. D. 1200, first brought it into use ; was certainly in the earliest instance brought to the knowledge of the Europeans, during the interval of this very period.† And, as certainly, in this period, the art of building *great ships*, was introduced by the Venetians and Genoese.

The connection therefore of the events of this period, peculiarly *with the Sea* ; even besides the astonishing and tremendous

* These circumstances may be seen briefly stated in the *Morsels of Criticism*, p. 435, 436, 439, 440, 441.

† A brief investigation of these interesting facts may be seen in *Anderson's History of Commerce*.—Vol. I. p. 99, 144, 74, 78, 80, 93.

event of *the Croisades*; is a most striking feature. Whilst perhaps, by *an Englishman*, it ought not to be forgotten, that, in this very period, in the year 1099, the *Goodwin Sands* also were first formed.*

In like manner, with regard to the second of those periods mentioned; namely, from 1519 to 1713; when the fourth vial was said to be poured out *upon the Sun*; it is most remarkable, as a very striking feature of those days; not only that a train of most important events, relating to civil and religious affairs, corresponding peculiarly to the emblems there mentioned, took place: but also, that during that period, the *Telescope was first invented*; and *Copernicus*, and *Galileo*, brought to light the great truths concerning the *Solar System*.

And now, with regard to the Seventh Vial; which, as far as we may, with due reverence, form conclusions concerning such tremendous dispensations, appears to have been poured out about the year 1788; and which is described as *poured out into The Air*: most surely our attention may well be awakened, by the singular circumstance of the many *new* discoveries with regard to *Fixed Air*; and by the *Strange and Novel Invention of the Air Balloon*; which took place, at a time, perfectly coinciding with the very *first outline* of the emblematical description.

Let us then proceed to examine the other features of this divine prophetic declaration, and warning; though it must be with great caution; and cannot be without horror.

Ver. 18. *There were voices, and thunders, and lightnings.*

* Stow, p. 134.

Voices; seem uniformly, in the prophetical language of all the Prophets, to denote *Informations of new things*: and *Writings*, concerning *new discoveries*, whether good or bad.

Thunders; seem as uniformly to denote *Doctrines*: and the introduction and teaching of *new opinions*, whether good or bad.

And Lightnings; seem to denote *convictions of Truth*, and the bringing of *Divine Truths to light*.

Thus we find it even said; *As the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in his day.* *

And it is said of our Lord; that *He was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* †

And of John the Baptist; *that he was a burning and a shining light.* ‡

So of Christ our Lord, the Apostle says, it was declared by the Prophet; *that He should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.* §

And the holy Apostle Peter admonishes us, *to take heed to the*

* Luke, chap. xvii. ver. 24.

‡ John, chap. v. ver. 35.

† John, chap. i. ver. 9.

§ Acts, chap. xxvi. ver. 23.

*sure Word of Prophecy, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.**

And if this is the right interpretation of those emblems, of *Voices*, and *Thunders*, and *Lightnings*; we cannot then but acknowledge, with astonishment, that no period like that commencing about 1788, did ever so much abound with all sorts of *New Informations*, and *Discoveries*, concerning remote countries; and concerning natural history; concerning new philosophical discoveries; and concerning both antient, and modern history.

No period did ever so much abound with *New Opinions*, and with *New Doctrines*:—many of which have even been the dire cause of the present *Woe* that is in the world; the so fearful instrument of the wrath of God.

And at the same time it must be acknowledged, that about this period, and since its commencement, many *Elucidations* of *Real Truth*, both abroad, and in this country, have come forth with convincing light.

The next words of the prophecy are,

* 2 Peter, chap. i. ver. 19.

I cannot but here add, in a note, that the words which follow (ver. 20), and which, in our version, are translated, *no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation*; and which have therefore so often been misunderstood; and perverted; to the preventing of all inquiry, in direct contradiction to the preceding admonition, *to take heed unto the word of prophecy*; should rather surely be translated—

2 Peter, chap. i.

Ver. 20. *Knowing this first, that all Prophecy of Scripture is of such a kind as not to be of its own solution, (i. e. not to be obvious on the face of it).*

ὅτι πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς, ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως ἢ γίνεσθαι.

And there was a great Earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.

The Greek word here translated *Earthquake*, is σεισμός; the very same that is sometimes used to signify a Great Storm; as in St. Matthew's Gospel; * where the ship in which our Lord was asleep, is described as being covered with waves: and the word, therefore, has certainly that signification, as well as the former.

And it is, in an emblematical sense again used; where the destruction of the Western Empire is foretold, by the same divine Prophet, † under the emblem of the opening of the sixth seal: and therefore uniformly means, (whatever be either the mode, or immediately operating cause), a great, and tremendous *Shaking of all things*; consistently with those solemn declarations.

I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. ‡

Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. §

And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of THE LORD, and for the glory of HIS MAJESTY, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. ||

And if such a great Shaking of Empires, and of the State of Civil Government upon earth, is really the proper emblematical import

* Matthew, chap. viii. ver. 24.

‡ Haggai, chap. ii. ver. 7.

|| Isaiah, chap. ii. ver. 19.

† Revelations, chap. vi. v. 12.

§ Hebrews, chap. xii. ver. 26.

of these words of prophecy : to what period of the world whatever can they be deemed so applicable, as to the present ? or to what State of Things whatever ; as to the present State of Europe ?

Then follow, in order, in the words of our Sacred Prophecy, these most remarkable words ; as they stand in our translation.

Ver. 19. *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell.*

But, thus translated, surely they are almost unintelligible : and have therefore been considered, only with much perplexity, and confusion of ideas, by most interpreters, and commentators, as relating to Rome.

Whilst, to say nothing of the difficulty of annexing any rational kind of idea to the *dividing* of a single city of houses and buildings *into three parts* : there would be a sort of tautology in this verse ; if these words did really relate to *Rome* : when it is allowed, on all hands, that the words immediately following, concerning *Babylon*, actually do relate to that proud City on seven hills ; so long deemed the Mistress of the world.

The words, however, are capable of a much plainer, and even of a wonderfully explicit translation, and meaning.

For the word *πόλις*, in its truest import, does not merely signify a city with its walls ; or relate merely to the buildings of a city ; but means rather *the Civil Constitution* of a country ; or indeed *a Free State*, as distinguished from *a Kingdom* *.

* Thus we find it used by *Aristotle* in his *Polit.* 1.—ἡ ἐκ πλειόνων κωμῶν κοινωνία τέλειος, πόλις.—and by *Thucydides*, lib. vii. p. 260,—ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις, καὶ ἔ τείχη,

And further, it is worthy of observation; that the Greek words translated *divided into three parts*, do not properly imply *rending*; or *breaking into pieces*: but are merely ἐγένετο ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη εἰς τρία μέρη; *became three parts, (or portions)*: whilst the form of expression used, is precisely the same as is used, by the same divine Prophet and Apostle, when he describes our Lord's garments, on his crucifixion, *as being made (or becoming) four parts, to every soldier a part.* * And the repetition of the particle (ἡ) shews that the translation, even if the word πόλις were to be rendered *City*, should not be the *The Great City*; but *a City which was a Great one*.

Under all these circumstances then, surely the fairer and plainer translation of the verse is,—

A State, which was a Great one, became divided into three portions, (or lots); and the States of the Nations, (or the States, amongst the Nations, as distinguishing them from the αἱ βασιλείαι, the Kingdoms) fell.

And if this translation be just, and right; with what awful astonishment must we behold the Events of the present day!

Was not *Poland*, a *State*; rather than a *Kingdom*? its King being merely elective.—Was it not a great one?—being one of the largest in extent of land, and in its produce, from the fertility of its soil, of almost any in Europe.—And is not Poland actually *become divided into three portions, or lots*?—One to the Emperor of

οὐδὲ νῆες ἀνδρῶν κεναί — and so by *Demosthenes*, pro Corona—ὁ τὴν πολὶν ἐξαπατῶν.— and again by *Aristotle*, in his *Ethics*, 8.—τὰς πόλεις συνέχει ἡ φιλία.— and we continually read in various authors, both poets, and historians—σώζειν πόλιν — and ἀπολέσαι πόλιν.

* John, chap. xix. ver. 23.

Russia ;—One to the Emperor of Germany ;—and One to the King of Prussia ?

And is not *this an unparalleled event* ?—an Event, unlike any one that ever before happened in the world.—And an Event, to which *alone* of all others, these words of Prophecy could *ever*, with any propriety be applied ?

And if the next words, *The States amongst the Nations fell* ; signify *States*, as distinguished from *Kingdoms*.

Were not the *Netherlands* a *State* ?—and is not that fallen ?

Was not *Holland* a *State* ?—and is not that fallen ?

Was not *Genoa* a *State* ?—and is not that fallen ?

Was not *Venice* a *State* ?—and is not that fallen ?

Were not the *Dominions of the House of Austria*, in Italy, *States* ?—and are not they fallen ?

Was not *Switzerland* a *State* ?—and is not it fallen ?

In short, are not all the *States*, in Europe fallen ?—all the States in what constituted the *Western Empire* ;—and belonged to the *Western Church* ;—upon which this *third and Last* tremendous *Woe* has been poured out ?

And was there ever a period of the world ; when these words of Prophecy, could be properly, and in every sense, rightly applied, before ?

We now come to those dread words:—*And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

And here,—it has been acknowledged uniformly, by all the ablest interpreters,* that *Great Babylon*, undoubtedly meant *Rome: the Proud City on seven hills; so long deemed the Mistress of the world.*

Nay, *an Angel*, speaking to the Holy Apostle, in this very divine vision, declares† it was so, in almost express words.

And is not *Rome* indeed *now* filled with the effects of wrath, and vengeance; and torn to pieces, by the scourge?—are not its boasted treasures of art, and antiquity, removed to another place?—are not its Palaces stripped, and spoiled?—are not all her pleasant, and precious things *departed* from her?—is she not consumed, with the fire, of the fierceness of anger, and violence?

Is not the *Papal power*, at Rome, which was once so terrible, and so domineering, at an end?

But let us pause a little.—Was not *this* end, in other parts of the Holy Prophecies, foretold to be, *at the END of 1260 years?* ‡—and was it not foretold, by Daniel, to be at the END of *a time, times, and half a time?* which computation amounts to the same period.

And now let us see;—hear;—and understand. **THIS IS THE YEAR 1798.**—And just 1260 years ago; in the very beginning

* See Mede's Works, p. 523, 525; and see Sir Isaac Newton on Daniel, in Bishop Horsley's edition of his Works, vol. v. p. 341, 349; and on the Apocalypse, p. 467; see also Newton on the Prophecies, vol. iii. p. 256, 317; and Bishop Hurd's Sermons, p. 355, 357, 377.

† Revelations, chap. xvii. v. 18. ‡ See Daniel, chap. vii. ver. 25.—chap. xii. ver. 7. Revelations, chap. xii. ver. 6.

of the year 538, *Belisarius* put an end to the Empire, and Dominion of the Goths, at Rome.

He had entered the City on the 10th of the preceding December, in triumph, in the name of *Justinean*, Emperor of the East: and had soon after made it tributary to him: leaving *thenceforward* from A. D. 538, NO POWER in Rome, that could be said to rule over the earth,—excepting the ECCLESIASTICAL PONTIFICAL POWER.

A Power that was now become sufficiently established for that purpose.—And which was also still further supported, just about this time, by the first establishment of the *first* religious order, the *Benedictines*, in the year 518: whilst a most characteristick badge of corruption had also now begun to be confirmed; by the worship of the Virgin Mary being ordained, by a general council at Constantinople, in 528.

And whilst it is moreover remarkable, that the use of the *Christian Æra* itself, had just been first introduced, in the year 516.

It is true; that after this entry of *Belisarius*, Rome was twice re-taken by *Totila*, and the *Goths*. But instead of setting up any Empire there; he, the first time, carried away *all* the Senate; and drove out all the inhabitants: and, the second time, he was himself soon defeated, and killed; and Rome was recovered for *Justinean*, by *Narses*.*

Still, however, no Dominion, No Power ruling over the World, ever had *any seat* there, any more, except the *Papal*. For the *Duke of Rome*, appointed by *Longinus*, in 568, was no more than a Subordinate Civil Officer; and even under the *Exarch*. Whilst the *Exarch of Ravenna*, (at the same time that he was, in reality, No

* All these facts may be seen at large in *Procopius*.

Residing Power at Rome) was, at most, himself only a Subordinate Officer, under the *Emperor of the East*. And the Dominion, and Power of the *Emperor of the East*, was quite different, and distinct, from what could at all properly be called *any Roman Power*. For nothing could, by any means, fairly come under *such* a description; but either the Dominion of the *Western Emperors*; or the Dominion of the *Kings of the Goths*; or the *Papal Dominion*.

We have reason to apprehend then, that *the 1260 years are now completed*.—And that we may venture to date *the commencement* of that period, not, as most Commentators have hitherto done, either from *Pepin's* giving the Pope *Ravenna*; or from *Charlemagne's* determining, and adjudging the Pope to be *God's Vicar on earth*: but from *the End of the Gothic Power at Rome*. Because both those other circumstances were only (like subsequent gifts, or acquisitions of territory, and revenue,) mere augmentations of splendour, and confirmations of that state of *Ecclesiastical Supremacy*, in which the Papal Power had been left, at Rome, by *Belisarius*; on his driving out the Goths, and ruining their kingdom.

And if these things are so;—then truly that Great City *Babylon is fallen,—is fallen:—is thrown down; and shall be found no more at all*. And nothing remains, but for us to wait, with awful apprehensions, for the end. Even for the completion of the further *closing events*, which are, in the emblematical language, of Holy Prophecy, described as being at hand.

As, in my former commentaries, I stopped short, at what appeared to be the precise description of the period in which we were *then* living: so do I now, at the present dread Period. Praying earnestly, for the safety, welfare, and prosperity of our King, and Country.

I have only to add; that the emblematical description which next follows (ver. 21.) of the *plague of the hail*; as it corresponds, in words, with the emblem of the sounding the first Trumpet;* when there followed *hail and fire mingled with blood*, denoting the *irruption and invasion of the Roman empire from all parts*; † so it seems to have been begun fearfully, in Europe, since 1788; and is not yet at an end.

And the tremendous events that have taken place, during this period; as they correspond with the emblematical descriptions of the pouring out of the *Seventh Vial*; so they correspond, in like manner, with the emblematical description, given by Daniel, ‡ of what should take place in the latter days. For we are informed, in that description, *that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the (emblematical) image upon his feet of iron, and clay, and broke the whole in pieces*. And we are expressly told, that this was an intimation; that the Great Empires of the World, the remains of the Roman Empire, should be broken in pieces, by certain *Instruments of God's Wrath*. Whilst it is moreover added, that, in the latter days, *there should be a Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.* §

These tremendous events correspond also, with that fearful declaration, in the Prophecy, in the 2d Psalm, concerning the *final coming of our Lord*; and the *preparation* for the establishment of His blessed Kingdom over the nations upon earth. *Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.* ||

And they correspond also, with the emblematical description,

* Revelations, chap. viii. ver. 7.

† Chap. ii. ver. 34, 35.

‡ Psalm, ii. ver. 9.

† Morsels of Criticism, p. 391.

§ Daniel, chap. xii. ver. 1.

given by OUR LORD HIMSELF, of the events that should take place a little space before His second coming.

The Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the Stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And there shall be signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken.†*

And now it may be observed, that there is no part of the whole emblematical language used in holy Scripture, easier to be understood, than the emblematical expressions used in these verses. As indeed, from the very first beginning of Prophecy, they were not only used, but explained.

For in Joseph's prophetic dream, we find,—the representation was, *that the Sun, and the Moon, and the eleven Stars made obeisance.‡* And we find, that Jacob instantly understood the emblem; saying, *shall I and thy Mother, and thy Brethren, indeed come and bow down ourselves to thee to the Earth? §*

These emblematical expressions are used also, in the same manner, in this very Prophecy of the Revelations; where the destruction of the Pagan Idolatrous Empire was foretold; under the typical representation of the opening of the Sixth Seal. ||

The Sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the Moon became as blood. And the Stars of Heaven fell unto the Earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the Heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every Mountain and Island were moved out of their places.

* Matthew, chap. xxiv. ver. 29; Mark, chap. xiii. ver. 24, 25.

† Luke, chap. xxi. ver. 25, 26.

‡ Genesis, chap. xxxvii. ver. 10.

§ Genesis, chap. xxxvii. ver. 9.

|| Revelations, chap. vi. ver. 12, 13, 14.

And they are used again, with excessive precision; when the destruction of the Western Empire, which was about *a third* part of the original Roman Empire, was foretold; under the emblematical representation of the sounding of the fourth Trumpet.*

The third part of the Sun was smitten, and the third part of the Moon, and the third part of the Stars.

We find then uniformly, that the *Sun* signifies *the King*, or Ruling Power, of any country, or great family:—The *Moon*, *the Queen*; and the *Stars*, *the Nobles*.

And if so; is not *the Sun* dreadfully darkened; and *the Moon* too, in France?—and is it not the more remarkable *there*;—because Lewis the XIVth, who boasted himself to be the Great, took for himself, as his device, *the Sun*, with that proud motto—

Nec pluribus impar;

and put it upon the badges used, on one of his great festivals; and upon a magnificent gold medal.

Truly, the Sun is not only darkened; but has perished; in France: and the Nobles; *all the Stars*; are fallen.

Is not the Sun darkened? and has it not even perished, in Poland?

Is not the Sun darkened, in Holland?

Is not the Moon darkened, in Portugal? or, at least, does it not cease to give her light. For *the Queen*, ceases to be capable of reigning?

Is not the Sun darkened in Sardinia, and Savoy?

Is not the Sun in danger of being darkened in Naples?

Is not the Sun in danger of being darkened in Spain?

* Revelations, chap. viii. ver. 12. And this matter may be seen explained more at large in the *Morsels of Criticism*, p. 401, &c.

Is not the Sun somewhat darkened in the Empire of Germany ?
Was not the Sun darkened in Sweden ; when their King was assassinated ?

Are not many of these, *even bruised with a rod of iron ; and almost broken in pieces like a potter's vessel ?*

And if the emblematical words *heaven*, and *heavens*, mean *governments*, and *ruling powers* ; as they seem uniformly to do, throughout all the books of Divine Prophecy ;

And if the *Sea*, and the *Waves*, and *Great Waters*, do as uniformly denote the multitudes of the *common people*, in every country ; (which interpretation is authorized even by the mouth of an Angel) ;*

Then surely we may say, the rest of the words of our Lord's tremendous Prophecy are, at this hour, completely fulfilling.

For, are not the *powers of the heavens*, the powers of almost all governments, *dreadfully shaken ?*

Is there not upon the earth, distress of nations, with perplexity ?—and that, in many instances, exactly as the original Greek words imply, *συνοχή ἐθνῶν ἐν ἀπορίᾳ* ; *anxiety of nations, through want of good counsel ?*

Are not the *sea and the waves*, the multitudes of the common people, in many countries, *roaring* ; with storm, and confusion ?

And are not *men's hearts failing them for fear*, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth ?

All this is enough, surely, to make us understand the Signs of the Times.

Enough to make us say, surely, *the end*, prophetically spoken of in Holy Scripture, approacheth.

* See Revelations, chap. xvii. ver. 15.

But there are other prophetical events still to come to pass.—
And the *Jews are to be restored*.

But when?—How?—or by whom?

Perhaps, with due reverence, we may approach *now*, in this so far advanced period of the world, even to the answering of these questions. As those Jews, who were learned in the Holy Scriptures, (as far as men could be in those early ages, before the word of divine prophecy was to be further unfolded), dared to answer *King Herod*, when he inquired, *where THE CHRIST should be born?* Though we ought not to forget, (as to the temporary obscurity of prophetical language, and as a proof of human failure of judgment,) that though they could perceive *that He was to be born in Bethlehem*; yet they did not, in that first dawn of apprehension, go so far as to apprehend the whole prophecy aright; or to believe in *HIM*, when He so first came upon earth; in His state of deep humiliation; to redeem mankind. Just as we find, in many instances, the *holy Apostles* themselves were, at first, slow to apprehend the things concerning *OUR LORD*; till He himself *opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures*;* and the things *which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms*,† concerning Him.

We approach unto the latter days!—I tremble whilst I write! God forbid I should mislead any.—But if I do apprehend aright; I must—I ought, to speak, and write with circumspection, *that* which I apprehend.

I am no rash enthusiast.—I desire to be exceedingly guarded against error:—and I have not the least presumptuous idea of intending to prophecy.—The word of prophecy is sealed for ever.

* Luke, chap. xxiv. ver. 45.

† Luke, chap. xxiv. ver. 44.

I desire only to apprehend what is written. And whilst the full conviction of truth compels me ; I wish, only, if possible, to be a means of leading others also to apprehend, more fully, *what* is written.

The Jews, we are assured, *shall be restored before the second coming of OUR LORD in glory*. But it has not yet been apprehended, that they should be restored *before* they should be converted.

Yet it does appear, that this also is declared ; in the holy word of Prophecy.

Read the words of the Prophet *Zechariah* ; concerning the final restoration, repentance, and conversion of the Jews.

Chap. xii.

Ver. 6. *In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf ; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left : and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again, in her own place, even in Jerusalem.*

Ver. 7. *The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, do not magnify themselves against Judah.*

Ver. 8. *In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David ; and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them.*

Ver. 9. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*

Ver. 10. *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall*

mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

Ver. 11. *In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.*

Ver. 12. *And the land shall mourn, every family apart, the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart: the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart:*

Ver. 13. *The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart: the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart:*

Ver. 14. *All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.*

Now here, surely it appears clear, from ver. 6 and 9; (1st), that they shall be restored *in a time of great trouble*; which trouble shall be even partly as a *preparation* for their restoration.—Even in a time when *all those* nations shall be troubled, who troubled them: and especially Rome; *Great Babylon*.

Just consistently with those words of the Prophet *Daniel*, concerning their *final restoration*; and concerning the *last days*.

Chap. xii.

Ver. 1. *At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*

2dly, It appears (from ver. 10); that their Repentance, and Conversion, and their Mourning for *Him whom they have pierced*; that is for *The Messiah*; shall be at *Jerusalem*. And therefore it must be *after* they are, at least *in part, restored*, and brought thither.

3dly, It appears from verse 12, 13, and 14; that although *particular families* are precisely named, yet *all the Tribes* are not

named; but only such families as may be supposed to have been amongst those *first* restored: as indeed it is declared (ver. 7), that *the Tribe of Judah* shall be restored, *before* the rest of the Tribes; and *a part* of that Tribe, namely, the *House of David*,—and those who were properly *Inhabitants of Jerusalem*,—*before* the whole of the Tribe.

And now I cannot but observe, that as the second coming of *The Messiah* in glory, is declared by our Lord himself, as well as by all these preceding prophecies, to be in the midst of a time of *great trouble upon earth*. So indeed the Jews formerly were so fully convinced of this; that when our blessed Lord, and Deliverer, *first* descended upon earth, in his state of deep humiliation, to be born as man, and to make the great atonement for sin; one of the principal reasons why the Jews, (who were really at that very time *waiting* in full expectation of the coming of their MESSIAH), did not *then* believe in Him, or receive Him as *The Christ*, was, because *it was not a time of general trouble upon earth*.

In short the very truth is; that on the one hand the Jews would not apprehend, nor believe the words of holy Prophecy written concerning our Lord's first coming *in His state of deep humiliation, and suffering*; being dazzled with the bright apprehensions of what was written concerning *His second coming; His coming in glory*:—and, on the other hand, the Christian world *now*, are, in the contrary extreme;—too backward to believe, and apprehend, what is really written, in the same divine words of holy Prophecy, concerning *His second coming upon earth in Glory*; being blinded by their constant habit of contending against the Jews, *chiefly* for the former; and by the presumptuous mystical application, that has taken place; by means of applying those holy words that relate to the latter, merely to the fancied prosperity of the Christian church

on earth. Though such fancied prosperity, is a misapplication of the words, in direct contradiction to all the warnings of our blessed Lord himself, and of his holy Apostles.

But yet, both the ideas as far as they could be founded on Scripture, both of Jews, and Christians, shall at last be made to accord ; and shall surely be accomplished fully ; and be found to be ultimately right.

Christ our Lord hath indeed *been on the earth* ; and in deep humiliation.—He hath suffered ; and hath made atonement for sin ; and hath purchased, and redeemed the souls of men, as with a great price ;—(*for unless He, and He alone ; unless He had gone through this earthly state of trial, entirely without spot or blemish, or resistance, even as a lamb without spot or blemish, we could not have been saved.*)

And He being risen from the dead, in His body ;—and having ascended into heaven, in His body ;—He will certainly, at the appointed time return ; in the clouds of heaven,* even as He ascended : and even as the Jews do now still expect ; *a Glorious Messiah*,—and *Their Messiah* ;—*Their Real Christ*, in every the fullest sense, in which they could fairly interpret what was written in their Books concerning Him.

The Prophet Isaiah expressly speaks of their *final restoration*, in a manner perfectly consistent with the idea of the Jews being restored, *before* they are converted ; when he thus describes both their dispersion, and restoration, in two very sublime verses.

Chap. lxvi.

Ver. 19. *And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those*

* See the express promise—Acts, chap. i. ver. 11.

that escape of them, unto the nations, to Tarsbish, Pul, and Lud that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.

Ver. 20. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters (or coaches), and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel, into the house of the Lord.*

And so again in

Chap. lx.

Ver. 8. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

Ver. 9. Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarsbish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver, and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God; and to the Holy One of Israel, because He hath glorified thee.

Ver. 10. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls.

And there are passages, in the holy Prophecy of the same divine Prophet, which to any one who is at all accustomed to apprehend the usual meaning of the emblematical language of prophecy, do expressly declare, both by *what people*; and from *what place*; and at *what time* they shall be restored.

Nay, there is even one whole chapter; which seems to give us the most astonishing, and the fullest information with regard to this matter.

* The marginal reading in our Bibles has it *coaches*.

Hereafter, perhaps, I may venture to explain the whole at large, in the manner in which it has struck me with the fullest conviction. And I have not the least doubt, but that it will also convince others.—But I forbear to do this at present ; for reasons that will appear both justifiable, and obvious.

Here therefore let us pause.—Nevertheless ; as I ventured to declare, on another occasion, once before ; *—so must I venture to declare again now ;—that the fullest conviction is fixed in my mind, that the Times, and the Events, will *quickly*, and most *sufficiently*, speak for themselves, in perfect conformity with the Word of God.

I have only to add : that, to those who will duly search, with holy fear ; without rash, hasty, presumption ; and without fastidious contempt of what they do not, at first sight, understand ; there is *much* more, *ready* to be known. And especially in that excellent, and astonishing book, the second book of *Esdras*. Concerning which it may be added ;—that, notwithstanding its being placed in the *Apocrypha* ; and notwithstanding its having been so long run down by presuming men ; and so much neglected by indolent men ; yet there is, in fact, the strongest evidence for its real authenticity ; both internal, and external.

As to its internal evidence ; let us only select *one* striking proof, hitherto unnoticed :—and that even from what has been hitherto deemed the most objectionable part of the whole book.

In the 14th chapter we read these, which have been so often unjustly deemed strange, and extravagant words :

Ver. 10. *For the world hath lost his youth, and the times begin to wax old.*

* See Morsels of Criticism, p. 453.

Ver. 11. *For the world is divided into twelve parts, and the ten parts of it are gone already, and half of a tenth part.*

Ver. 12. *And there remaineth that which is after the half of the tenth part.*

But what *world* is the Prophet speaking of?—not of the *earth*; the *terraqeous globe*.—No, nor yet of the *duration of mankind as dwellers upon earth*.—But plainly of the *then fashion, and state of things on earth*, during the prevalence of Paganism; and during the continuance of the Jewish *Theocracy*; and previous to the coming of *The Messiah*: *WHOSE first appearance, and coming upon earth, was to be the end of the state of the Old World, which had then already lost its youth.*

Now, let us see *when* precisely, these words were spoken; and *when* this prophecy was delivered?

In the beginning of the 3d chapter, the Prophet fixes the exact date. For he says,

Ver. 1. *In the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city, I was in Babylon, and lay troubled upon my bed, and my thoughts came up over my heart.*

And only a few days after this, we find it was, that the holy Vision was communicated to him; and that the words in question were spoken by the Angel.

It only remains therefore to know what City it was; *whose ruin* he speaks of?

And certainly it was not *Jerusalem*. Because any one acquainted with chronology, and history, will recollect, that the

ruin and destruction of *Jerusalem*, was in the year 587, A. C.; which was more than *fifty* years *before* *Cyrus* took *Babylon*: and therefore must have been still *longer* before the time of this Vision of *Esdras*; who we are expressly told (chap. i. ver. 3.) was captive in the time of *Artaxerxes*. *

The *City* then, whose ruin the Prophet speaks of, must have been *Babylon* itself; the very *City* in which the Prophet was *then* *laying* *troubled upon his bed*.

And if so;—then, as the *City* of *Babylon*, we know, was ruined as to its Assyrian Dominion;—was taken, and plundered by *Cyrus*;—and the whole Assyrian Empire was ruined, and overturned, by *Cyrus*, in the year 536, A. C.; the time of the Vision, in the *thirtieth* year *after*, must have been in the year 31 *after* that event; that is, in the year 505, A. C.

Now then let us see, as to the rest of the computation.

The Prophet says, there remained of the duration of the *then* *State of the World*, only that which is *after the half of the tenth part*; the whole period being divided into *twelve parts*.

Then it is plain, there remained only *three half parts*.

And if *the end* of the period of that Old World, was to be just at *the beginning* of the New Period, under the *Blessed Gospel*; taking its date, *from the manifestation of THE MESSIAH*.—Then 505 years was, in prophetic language, *three half parts*:—and of course $168\frac{1}{3}$ years, or rather 168 years (according to the more usual lax mode of general prophetic computation) would be *one half part*.

And having obtained these facts as *data*; we may perceive,

* In the year 464, A. C. *Ezra* (or *Esdras*) was appointed by *Artaxerxes Longimanus* to go into Judea, to settle the Jewish Government there.

that an whole part would be 336 years. And consequently that *twelve whole parts*, or the whole period of the duration of the state of the *Old World*, of the old fashion and frame of things, civil and ecclesiastical, according to the Prophecy, would be 4032 years.

Now it is at present generally acknowledged, that Our Blessed Lord was born on earth, in the year of the world 4004 from the creation; at least so the allowed computation is, from the Hebrew mode of reckoning. And we know that Our Blessed Lord *began to be* ABOUT *thirty years of age*, when he was baptized by John.*

If therefore we suppose those words to imply that *He* was twenty-eight, or a little more; those few years added to 4004, make just 4032. The completion of the very period, *when*, according to this Divine Prophecy, the Old Dispensation of things in the World was to end.†

* Luke, chap. iii. ver. 23.

† The whole computation detailed at length, may be shewn as follows :

	A. C.
The complete ruin of the Babylonian empire was	536
The time of the Vision of Esdras was <i>the thirtieth year after</i> , and that must have been therefore properly 31 years after	31
Then the three half parts were	3)505
And consequently one half part was	168 $\frac{1}{3}$
	2
From whence it follows that one whole part was, if we neglect the fraction; as is often usual in prophetical computations	336
	12
	672
	336
And of course then all the twelve parts; or the whole age of the Old World; amounted to	4032

If this, considering how difficult it always is to adjust any chronological facts, with minute exactness, is not *internal* evidence of the truth of this Prophecy ; I know not what can be so of any.

Now then,

Our Lord was born on earth, in the year of the world	-	-	4004
And began to preach, and to declare His Blessed Gospel, when he was 28,			
or about 30 years of age	-	-	28
And this amounts exactly to	-	-	Years 4032

As these computations do, in this striking manner, accord with the Prophecy ;— even in a more precise manner than is common in the usual lax mode of Prophetical Computations ; so it further deserves notice, that the *beginning* of every one of *the twelve parts* mentioned, seems in a most remarkable manner, very nearly, to correspond with the *greatest, and most interesting leading events*, in the world.

Indeed those who duly search the records of chronology, will find no *such leading events* in any of the intervening spaces of time : or *such* as would in any respect correspond with any *other divisions* of the Old World's age.

And what is still more remarkable ; *every one of these twelve parts* of the duration of the Old World, *in all its whole progressive history of events*, and circumstances ; seems to have had a very *different distinguished character*, from those that either went before, or followed after.

A. M. A. C. Part

1 The Creation.

336 . 3668 } . 2 A very little before this year, men had just begun *to call upon the*
336 336 } *Name of the Lord.*

672 . 3332 } . 3 Enoch lived. And the knowledge of Astronomy was first intro-
336 336 } duced. As also Chemistry ; and the working in Brass, and
in Iron.

1008 . 2996 } . 4 A very few years after this, *Seth* died ; and *Noah* was born,
336 336 }

And as to the external evidence ; surely that is not to be esteemed at all *less* ; when we find Our Lord Himself seems to have vouchsafed to refer to this book, just as He did to the other Prophecies : and especially in those remarkable words, which plainly intimate a reference to a *preceding prophecy*, and cannot

1344 . 2660 } . 5 The wickedness of the Old World was come to its greatest pitch.
336 336 } And, in this part, the Ark was built ; and the Flood came.

A. M. A. C.

1680 . 2324 } . 6 The world was re-peopled by Noah, and his Sons. And, in this
336 336 } part, *Babel*, and *Nineveh* were first built.

2016 . 1988 } . 7 A very few years after this, in 1996, Abram was born.
336 336 }

2352 . 1652 } . 8 A few years before this, in 1706 A. C. Jacob, and the Israelites
336 336 } went into Egypt.

2688 . 1316 } . 9 Just before this, in 1440 A. C. *Joshua* had put the Israelites into
336 336 } possession of the Promised Land.

3024 . 980 } . 10 Solomon was reigning ; and had just dedicated the temple, A. C.
336 336 } 1004.

3360 . 644 . 11 Only about 100 years before this, Rome had been founded ; and
336 336 } therefore *now* first became known as a *kingdom in the world*. And
Sir Isaac Newton, in his Chronology, deems Rome even to have
been built about this time A. C. 627.—And about this time
also, foreigners were planted in *Samaria*, by *Eserhaddon*.—The
kingdom of the Medes was also established about this time.

3696 . 308 . 12 This was the æra of the Macedonian Empire. Alexander hav-
336 336 } ing entered Babylon in 331.

A. D.

4032 . 28 Our Lord begins to make known the Holy Gospel. And the old

well be applied to any prophecy we know of, excepting to that of Esdras.

Luke, chap. 11.

Ver. 49. *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them Prophets, and Apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute.*

state of the world ends ;—ends, even in its *Gentile Civil State*, by the Establishment of the Roman Empire, under Augustus.

Having given this short illustration, I cannot but add, in this note ; that there is another passage, in the Book of Esdras, which has been most exceedingly scoffed at ; and which yet, when the veil of ignorance is once removed, appears to be no ways exceptionable ; but indeed an account perfectly consistent not only with the antient, but with the modern customs, of the East. It is as follows :

Chap. ix.

Ver. 23. ———— *cease yet seven days more, (but thou shalt not fast in them.)*

Ver. 24. *But go into a field of flowers, where no house is builded, and eat only the flowers of the field ; taste no flesh, drink no wine, but eat flowers only.*

Ver. 26. *So I went my way into the field which is called Ardath, like as he commanded me : and there I sat amongst the flowers, AND DID EAT OF THE HERBS OF THE FIELD, and the meat of the same satisfied me.*

Now we find, from Chardin, that the going into a *field of flowers* ; and the pitching a tent there ; and the dwelling there for several days together, in the spring ; has amongst the Persians always been deemed a great luxury ;—and is an indulgence with which they often gratify themselves. And as to *Esdras's* eating only *the herbs of the field*, (which might be supposed to be boiled, or even dressed in various ways,) it certainly is what many of the Asiatics do, out of choice, to this very hour.

It is worth while to insert the express words of Chardin himself. Tom. I. p. 176. Ed. printed at Amsterdam, 1711.

Ver. 50. *That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation.*

Again, Luke, chap. xiii.

Ver. 34. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not?*

Ver. 35. *Behold your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**

Now the words of *Divine Wisdom* here referred to, are actually to be found, and, as I apprehend, are *only to be found*, in this second book of Esdras; for there we read,

Chap. i.

Ver. 28. *Thus saith the Almighty Lord,—Have I not prayed you as a father his sons, as a mother her daughters,—*

“ Le Gouverneur alla au Camp, qu’il avoit fait dresser a une lieüe de la ville, *en une grande et belle prairie toujours couverte de fleurs*, durant la belle saison, &c.

“ Les tentes du Gouverneur étoient magnifiques. Il y avoit en petit, toutes les commoditez d’un Palais, &c.

“ *Les grands ont coûtume en ce royaume, d’aller ainsi passer le printems a la campagne.*”

The only difference was, that this Governor, mentioned by Chardin, with his suite, went, *into the field of flowers*, merely to enjoy rural diversions: and Esdras, with fewer attendants, went for the sake of serious retirement.

* See also Matthew, chap. xxiii. ver. 34, 35, 37, 38, 39.

Ver. 29. *That ye would be my people, and I should be your God ; that ye would be my children, and I should be your Father ?*

Ver. 30. *I gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings : but now, what shall I do unto you ? I will cast you out from my face.*

Ver. 32. *I sent unto you my servants the prophets, whom ye have taken and slain, and torn their bodies in pieces, whose blood I will require of your hands, saith the Lord.*

Ver. 33. *Thus saith the Almighty Lord, your house is desolate.*

These intimations concerning the authenticity of the second book of Esdras, I have ventured here to give ; with a view to remove the too commonly imbibed prejudice against it ;—and to draw the serious, considerate, and learned, to an attentive perusal of it.

The figurative intimations to be found in it throughout ; concerning *Jerusalem* ; and concerning the *Roman Empire* ; and concerning *its Succeeding Kingdoms* ; have many of them been most wonderfully fulfilled already.

And at the same time it strongly marks out the present times of trouble :—and even admonishes those, who trust on God, how to act. Concluding with words that cannot be too often repeated. *

Behold, God himself is the judge, fear Him : leave off from your

sins, and forget your iniquities, to meddle no more with them for ever; so shall God lead you forth, and deliver you from all trouble.

The language of the whole book moreover, is uniformly consistent with all the rest of the prophetical emblematical language, in every part of the Holy Scriptures. And may, by the assistance of the Key, which is afforded us to that language, (by the uniform tenour of its expressions in all the Divine Writings,) be, with due attention, effectually understood: and especially as to the many parts hitherto accomplished.

It only remains to be observed, that the events foretold in the Book of *Esdras*, like those predicted in the *Apocalypse of St. John*, are (excepting what is mentioned with regard to Jerusalem, and the Jews,) almost entirely confined to the history of *those parts of the earth*, where Christianity has had its spread, and influence.

Nor ought this to be wondered at, either by Jew, or Gentile; or by any profane scoffer.

For as, in the promised MESSIAH, *all the Nations of the Earth were to be finally blessed*. And as, in the gradual prophetical unfolding of the history of the immediate Descendants of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Holy David*, to whom *the promise* was first made; and in the prophetical unfolding the history of the Church of CHRIST, during its first state of *spiritual warfare*, on earth, before *the glorious, final, second coming of THE MESSIAH*; was in reality involved the final fate, and the promised final happiness, of *all the rest of the nations upon earth*;—so the account of the superintending guidance of the events relating to the history of *the Jews*, and of what has been properly *the Christian world*; was alone of importance to be prophetically pointed out.—

To be pointed out by that Divine Word of Prophecy, concerning which it is declared, that

The Testimony of Jesus, is the Spirit of Prophecy.

or, as the words should rather be translated, that

*The Spirit of Prophecy, is the Testimony of Jesus.**

Seen, as all Prophecy should be seen in this light ; the events of the history of other nations upon earth, besides the *Jews*, and *Christian Nations*, during the interval to which the Prophecies relate ; could be of no more consequence, than the history of *any private man* ; nor any more worthy to be taken notice of, in the prophetical writings : though indeed all those nations, as well as every private individual, will finally be interested, in the highest degree ; and, unless it is *wilfully* their own faults, be finally *blessed*, in the full completion of all things that are written. And *in the final perfecting of all things*, by THE MESSIAH—THE CHRIST—THE LORD.

In the mean while, surely we may be allowed to remark ;—and ought to mark ; with regard to the spiritual warfare of the *Christian Church* ;—that as *Atheism masked*, in reality produced its worst corruptions ; so *Atheism unmasked* has produced its dire scourge. —And if its mischief should proceed even still further, we ought not to be astonished, when we remember, that Our Lord Himself has pronounced those alarming words,

Luke, chap. xviii. v. 8.

When THE SON OF MAN cometh, shall he find FAITH on the earth ?

The whole book of *Esdras* has in great part been fulfilled.—And an apprehensive mind must wish to recommend the atten-

* Revelations, chap. xix. ver. 20.

tive perusal of it, to all the serious, and well disposed, who have been used to search the Prophetical Writings.

These are not days to compliment away the truth, out of respect of persons, or of opinions; or to be timid in declaring it.

Truth is awfully great. Let it ever fairly be brought to light; and left to its own energetic strength, to prevail.

FINIS.

